

Applicants : Barrott et al.
Serial No. : 09/409,566

Amendment to the Claims

24. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method permitting a user to electronically plan a funeral ceremony on a computer comprising:

employing on the computer a funeral planning routine comprising processes adapted to guide the user in electronically planning the funeral ceremony, to access a database storing images associated with a plurality of funeral products, to retrieve and initiate a display of a funeral item image on the computer in response to a request, and to generate a funeral plan arranging the funeral ceremony;

receiving via the computer planning data from the user, said planning data including biographical information, period of execution, and funeral arrangement information;

utilizing said planning data in said funeral planning routine to generate said funeral plan; and

outputting via the computer at least a summary of said funeral plan to the user such that the user may determine whether to revise or accept said funeral plan as represented by said received planning data.

25. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 wherein if the user decides to revise said funeral plan then the user may edit said planning data, and if the user decides to accept said funeral arrangement plan then said funeral planning routine allocates resources based on said period of execution.

26. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24, wherein said funeral arrangement information includes type of disposition, type of funeral service, location of the funeral, and desired funeral services and/or products.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24, further comprising presenting the user with an electronic selection guide for entering at least a portion of said funeral arrangement information.

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28. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising retrieving requested information associated with a plurality of products and services.
29. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising running a price summary allowing the user to evaluate the immediate monetary effect in order to permit the user to adjust choices accordingly.
30. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 wherein said summary comprises name of user, selected services and/or products, quantity of selected services and/or products, price, tax, sub-total, cash advance amount, cash advance total, customer total, and combinations thereof.
31. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising saving the funeral arrangement plan to a database.
32. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising forwarding at least a portion of said funeral arrangement plan to a distributor's system when said period of execution is at-need.
33. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising updating inventory of available products and/or services from a distributor such that said user may select said available products and/or service to include in said funeral arrangement information.
34. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 wherein said funeral planning routines are being executed on a computer local to the user.

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35. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising outputting upon request a price list for funeral products and/or services.
36. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 wherein said period of execution is either pre-need or at-need.
37. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprise permitting the user to change said period of execution between a pre-need registration to an at-need order.
38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein said funeral arrangement information comprises type of deposition selected among choices comprising burial and cremation.
39. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24, wherein said funeral arrangement information comprises type of service selected among choices comprising viewing, memorial service, ~~funeral ceremony~~, graveside service, and combination thereof.
40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein said funeral arrangement information comprises location of funeral selected among choices comprising funeral home, and other facility.
41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein said planning data further includes period of funeral services.
42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein said summary comprises currently selected services, currently selected products, currently selected cash

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advance items, customer information, current quantity and cost, current customer total, and combinations thereof.

43. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising maintaining a database containing funeral home information comprises name, distributor account number, shipping address data, internet address, ftp address, contact information, disclosure information, phone, fax, email, state and local tax rates, and combinations thereof.

44. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24, wherein a portion of said planning data is obtained from a presentation to the user of available funeral arrangement products and services and a selection by the user of said available funeral arrangement products and services.

45. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 24 wherein at least a portion of said funeral planning routines are being provided to a computer of the user from a server.

46. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 33 wherein said updating is via an inventory check with a server of said distributor.

47. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 45 further comprising providing a connection between said computer of the user and said server via the Internet.

48. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method permitting a user to electronically plan a funeral ceremony on a computer comprising:

employing on the computer a funeral planning routine comprising processes adapted to guide the user in electronically planning the funeral ceremony, to access a database storing images associated with a plurality of funeral products, to retrieve and

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initiate a display of a funeral item image on the computer in response to a request, and to generate a funeral plan arranging the funeral ceremony;

retrieving via the computer information requested by the user associated with a plurality of products and services;

receiving via the computer planning data from the user, said planning data including biographical information, period of execution, and funeral arrangement information comprising desired products and services;

utilizing said planning data in said funeral planning routine to generate said funeral plan; and

outputting via the computer at least a summary of said funeral plan to the user such that the user may determine whether to revise or accept said funeral plan as represented by said received planning data.

49. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48, wherein said retrieving is by accessing a database storing said information.

50. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48, wherein said plurality of products and/or services are provided by a plurality of funeral service providers, each of said plurality of funeral service providers is associated with a distinct set of products and services from said plurality of products and services.

51. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 49, further comprising communicating with a distributor server to update at least a portion of said information on said plurality of products and services.

52. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising preventing the user from seeing out-of-stock products contained in said information.

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53. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising presenting an electronic selection guide which lists a plurality of selectable user actions for interactively guiding the user in planning the funeral ceremony and selecting said desired products and services.

54. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising displaying an electronic response page in response to selection of one of a plurality of user actions provided by said funeral planning routine, said electronic response page providing said information on available funeral services and products in a database and enabling selection of said desired products and services from said available funeral services and products.

55. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising presenting an electronic selection guide page; displaying a current services page in response to a selected user action for services from said electronic selection guide page and populating said current services page with existing funeral service information contained in a database.

56. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising customizing said information as it should appear to the user by updating said information contained in a database with customized information.

57. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising:

storing said information in a database;

customizing said information by:

selecting which of said information in said database to display to the user;
customizing said information as it should appear to the user; and
updating said database.

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58. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising:

storing said information in a database;
updating said database by downloading from a database server updated information in response to a user selection inventory update; and
updating said database with said information update.

59. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 48 further comprising entering said biographical information on an electronically displayed biographical entry form.

60. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 48 further comprising presenting electronically a package page enabling user selection of various packages of preselected funeral products and/or services.

61. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 48 wherein said desired products and services include cremation selection, burial selection, transportation selection, caskets selection, urns selection, marker selection, funeral related merchandise selection, and combinations thereof.

62. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising forwarding an order generated from said summary to a server of a distributor for processing delivery of said order.

63. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 60, further comprising sending a confirmation from said server to the user confirming said order.

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64. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 48 further comprising displaying a multimedia presentation corresponding to user action for particular information when said user action for said particular information is selected.

65. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of according to claim 64 wherein said particular information includes urn products, casket products, marker products, funeral related merchandise, explanations of disposition processes, and explanations of services.

66. (Currently Amended) A funeral arrangement planning system adapted to permit a user to electronically plan a funeral ceremony comprising:

a computer running a funeral planning routine comprising processes adapted to guide the user in electronically planning the funeral ceremony, to access a database storing images associated with a plurality of funeral products, to retrieve and initiate a display of a funeral item image on the computer in response to a request, and to generate a funeral plan arranging the funeral ceremony for generating a funeral arrangement plan for a period of execution;

an input device for inputting to the funeral planning routine planning data, said planning data including biographical information , period of execution, and funeral arrangement information;

a display for presenting visual objects related to said funeral planning routine and said planning data;

a memory device storing information related to funeral products and services;

a communication device for connecting to a remote server of a distributor of said funeral products and services to update said information and to provide an order to said distributor;

said computer utilizes said funeral planning routine to interactively guide the user through the planning of the funeral by accepting said planning funeral arrangement data from the user and, when necessary, accessing said information stored in

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said memory device and storing said planning funeral arrangement data to said memory device, and

said computer utilizes said funeral planning routine and said planning data to generate a summary such that the user may determine whether to revise or accept the funeral arrangement plan as represented by said ~~input~~-planning data, if revising then the user may edit any portion of said planning data, and if accepting then said funeral planning routine is capable of sending said order to said distributor.

67. (New) A computer-implemented method for guiding a funeral planning session and permitting a user to electronically plan a funeral on a computer comprising:

employing on the computer a funeral planning routine comprising processes adapted to automatically guide the user in electronically planning the funeral ceremony, to access a database storing images associated with a plurality of funeral products, to retrieve and initiate a display of a funeral item image on the computer in response to a request, and to generate a funeral plan arranging the funeral ceremony;

receiving via the computer planning data from the user, said planning data including biographical information, period of execution, and funeral arrangement information which includes selected products and/or services;

utilizing said planning data in said funeral planning routine to generate said funeral plan; and

outputting via the computer at least a summary of said funeral plan to the user such that the user may determine whether to revise or accept said funeral plan as represented by said received planning data, said summary including pricing information on said selected products and/or services.

68. (New) The computer implemented method of claim 67 provided as program instructions on a computer readable medium.